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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/008,457	11/16/2001	David L. Brock	8491.7018	5179
21005	7590	01/14/2004	EXAMINER	
HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C. 530 VIRGINIA ROAD P.O. BOX 9133 CONCORD, MA 01742-9133			PHILOGENE, PEDRO	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3732	

DATE MAILED: 01/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/008,457	BROCK ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Pedro Philogene	3732	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 November 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-31 and 33-61 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 31 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-30 and 33-66 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 11,14.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

Allowable Subject Matter

The indicated allowability of claims 7-11,15-18 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Niemeyer et al.. Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-30, 33-61 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Niemeyer et al. (6,364,888).

With respect to claims 1, 7, 15, 28,33, 37, 40, 52 Niemeyer et al disclose a master station (700) comprising a lower positioner assembly; an upper positioner assembly supported over the lower positioner assembly and rotational relative to the lower positioner assembly to enable lateral side to side surgeon manipulation; as best seen in FIGS 1A, 6A-C and as set forth in column 9, lines 5-30, an arm assembly including an elongated arm member (702) having a hand assembly (706) at its distal end for engagement by the surgeon's hand, and a proximal end pivotally supported from the upper positioner assembly to enable an orthogonal forward and back surgeon manipulation in a direction substantially orthogonal to the lateral surgeon manipulation,

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as set forth in column 31, lines 11-67, column 32, lines 1-67; column 35, lines 1-67, column 36, lines 1-67; the assemblies being disposed remote from the slave station and to the side of the operator so that the arm member extends in a direction along at least a portion of the operator arms; as best seen in FIG.9 and as set forth in column 13, lines 48-57; one of the holder is adapted to receive a thumb and the other adapted to receive a forefinger; as set forth in column 9, lines 10-15; first, second and third pivot joints to provide motion actuation to the medical instrument; as best seen in Fig.11.

With respect to claims 2-6,8-14,16-27, 29,30,34-36, 38,39, 41-47, 53-61 Niemeyer et al disclose all the limitations, as best seen in FIGS. 1-30; and as set forth in column 9, lines 5-13, column 31, lines 11-67; column 32, lines 1-67; columns 35-36, lines 1-67.

With respect to claims 48-51, the method steps, as set forth, would have been inherently carried out in the operation of the device above.

Response to Amendment

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-31 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 31 is allowed.

Conclusion

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pedro Philogene whose telephone number is (703) 308-2252. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin P Shaver can be reached on (703) 308-2582. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9302.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.

Pedro Philogene
January 09, 2004


PEDRO PHILOGENE
PRIMARY EXAMINER